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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the administration of the Preschool Attainment Record (PAR), which is used to estimate developmental levels in children from 6 months to 8 years of age. The PAR was given to 17 5-year-old disadvantaged boys and girls of average intelligence. To reduce the tendency of evaluators to inflate scores, the test was administered by both the mother and teacher of each child. Attainment Ages (AA) and Attainment Quotients (AQ) were determined for each child, and these scores were compared for similarity of parent and teacher evaluations. Comparison of AQ scores showed that parents scored boys higher than teachers did, but there were no differences in judgments of girls' developmental levels. It is suggested that the reasons for disagreement between parents and teachers on boys' attainment be pursued. (DR)

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A Comparison of Parent and Teacher Ratings on the Preschool Attainment Record of Seventeen Five-year-old Disadvantaged Children

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Tests of social maturity administered to parents or adult caretakers in order to obtain social ages of children are notoriously risky measures used singly for important decisions about children. However, such measures remain in use as screening devices or as quick estimates of developmental levels when access to children is difficult, impractical, or when only a rough measure is required for grouping. With the development of large scale programs such as Headstart, special education programs and residential care evaluation programs, social maturity scales were pressed into service. They remain simple to administer, relatively accurate in leveling children, and useful where crude measures will suffice.

Until recently, the Vineland Social Maturity Scale was the most frequently used measure for social maturity estimates. The Cain-Levine Scale has recently become available but is of no use for children under five years of age. Very recently, the Preschool Attainment Record (PAR) has been standardized and published and promises to be of great value in estimating the

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"preschool attainment" or developmental levels in children from six months to eight years of age.

However, it is important to note that in the use of such tests, there is a tendency for parents or poor reporters to inflate scores by reporting higher levels of accomplishment than the child is capable of attaining. For this reason, it is important to get two estimates of the child's ability at or near the same time of sampling, to reduce this inflationary tendency. Such simultaneous measurement also serves to comment on the reliability of the testing method and/or the acuity of reporters and evaluators in arriving at accurate and complete judgments about the ability levels of children.

This is a report on results of the administration of the PAR to both parent (mother) and teacher of 17 five-year-old disadvantaged children in an Education Improvement Program.

Subjects and Procedure

The mothers and teachers of eight boys (Mean CA 67.25 months; Mean IQ 91.75) and nine girls (Mean CA 68.66 months; Mean IQ 90.55) were administered standardized interviews by the same evaluator. Parents and teachers were interviewed individually within a week of each other. Responses of the reporters were noted in eight categories of development covered by the PAR: Ambulation, Manipulation, Rapport, Communication, Responsibility, Information, Ideation and Creativity. Data were processed according to PAR instructions to yield Attainment Ages (AA) for each child from each reporter as well as Attainment Quotients (AQ). Scores were compared for similarity of parent and teacher evaluations.

Results

Table 1 shows the Mean AQ data which was obtained from parent and teacher. Parents rate boys significantly higher than teachers rate them ($p < .05$) while there is no significant difference in their evaluations of girls ($p < .50$). There was a significantly higher parental evaluation of both boys and girls ($p < .05$) attributable to the wide discrepancy from teacher evaluations of boys alone.

(Table 1 about here)

Table 2 indicates Mean subtest or category scores on the PAR of both parent and teacher evaluations of the 17 children. Close scrutiny of the boys' scores suggests that the parental over-evaluation, or teacher under-evaluation, rests mainly in the areas of Rapport, Manipulation, Communication and Creativity. The other four category scores and all eight for the girls are remarkably alike for parent and teacher evaluations.

(Table 2 about here)

Discussion

A replication with a large sample is in order but these data suggest that the variability of the boys' behavior at the age range judged, leads to parent-teacher discrepancy in judgment of their developmental levels. It is also possible that either the repertoire of behavior in boys is more limited in the presence of teachers or that mothers are more likely to "fudge" their reports on their sons than on their daughters.

Summary

Seventeen five-year-old boys and girls of average intelligence were evaluated via the Preschool Attainment Record by both mother and teacher. Comparison of Attainment Quotients suggest a significant discrepancy between parents and teachers on boys' developmental levels (parents scoring the boys higher than teachers do) but no differences were found in judgments of girls' developmental levels. It was suggested that the reasons for disagreement between parents and teachers on boys' attainment should be pursued.

References

Doll, Edgar A., Preschool Attainment Record, American Guidance Service, Circle Pines, Minnesota, 1967.

Table 1.

Mean Scores on the PAR Comparing Parent and Teacher Responses on the Same Children

	Parent AQ	Teacher AQ	t $p <$
Boys (N-8)	106.25	94.25	.05
Girls (N-9)	104.33	101.55	.50
All (N-17)	105.17	98.7	.05

Table 2.

Mean Scores by Category Comparing Parent and Teacher

Responses on the Same Children

	Parent				Teacher			
	Boys	Girls	All	Range	Boys	Girls	All	Range
Ambulation	13.25	13.50	13.38	11.5-14	12.44	13.17	12.82	10-14
Manipulation	11.62	11.67	11.65	9-14	10.25	11.55	10.94	8.5-14
Rapport	12.69	12.56	12.62	11-14	10.69	11.39	11.06	5.5-14
Communication	10.69	10.67	10.68	9-12	9.31	9.72	9.53	6.5-12
Responsibility	12.75	12.17	12.44	9-14	12.00	12.61	12.32	7.5-14
Information	11.87	11.50	11.68	9-14	11.43	12.00	11.74	9.5-13
Ideation	11.87	12.11	12.00	10-13	11.06	11.55	11.32	9-13
Creativity	10.81	11.61	11.24	7.5-13	9.43	10.83	10.18	3-14